



## Complaints Policy and Procedure

### **1. Introduction:**

- a. This policy will outline the process for bringing complaints against the union or any member of its staff (including the Officer Trustees).
- b. Complaints regarding members of the Students' Union should be addressed through the Member Disciplinary Procedure as outlined in the Students' Union bye-laws.

### **2. Informal Resolution:**

- a. In the first instance it will be expected that an individual wishing to make a formal complaint should have attempted to try and informally resolve the issue with the individual or individuals involved.
- b. Formal complaints will not be considered by the Students' Union if the complainee has not attempted to resolve the complaint informally, however this will not apply if the complainee has a suitable reason why they feel an informal complaint would not be an appropriate way to deal with the issue.

### **3. Submitting a Formal Complaint**

- a. Formal complaints will only be considered when submitted via the complaints form available at <https://www.uwsuforms.co.uk/view.php?id=96435>, written acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent within five working days of a complaint being submitted.
- b. Complaints about an Officer Trustee will be referred to an External Trustee who shall determine whether the complaint is of a democratic nature and should be dealt with under the Bye-Laws, or whether it is a complaint of misconduct and should be dealt with under the Students' Union employee procedures.
- c. Complaints about a member of staff of the Students' Union will be dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer or their nominee.

- d. If the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, this will be dealt with by the Chair of the Students' Union Trustee Board.

#### **4. Complaint Outcomes:**

- a. A complaint will be investigated and resolved within 20 working days of written acknowledgement of the receipt of a complaint by the Students' Union. If this procedure is delayed for any reason beyond 20 days, the complainee will receive a written explanation of the reasons for this and clear date for when the investigation will be completed by.
- b. The outcomes of the complaint will be as follows:
  - i. Dismiss the complaint.
  - ii. Uphold the complaint, wholly or partially, with an appropriate resolution applied.
  - iii. Decide if the complaint should be considered under the staff disciplinary procedures.
- c. Where a complaint is referred to be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, the complainee will not be informed of the outcome of this procedure.

#### **5. Appeal:**

- a. If a complainee is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may write to the Students' Union Board of Trustees who will independently look into the appeal.
- b. An appeal will only be considered by the Board of Trustees where:
  - i. The Complaints process has not followed the correct procedure.
  - ii. New information has become available that for good reason could not be presented during the Complaints Process at the time of the original investigation.
  - iii. The actions applied as a result of the investigation are not proportionate.

- c. An appeal should be submitted in writing to the Trustee Board chair within 5 working days of receipt of the outcome of the investigation.

**6. University Investigation:**

- a. If a complainee is not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may request that the university investigate the process which the Students' Union has undertaken to resolve the complaint.
- b. Following this investigation, the university may contact the Trustee Board of the Students' Union and make recommendations for the Students' Union to change the outcome of the complaints process so that the SU board can follow if they wish.
- c. The Students' Union is an independent organisation from the University of Westminster and so is under no obligation to follow any recommendations made by the University.

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